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Vaccines for EEE and WNV Can Protect Your Equines

[The Massachusetts Department of Public Health \(DPH\) announced that Eastern Equine Encephalitis \(EEE\) has been found in a mammal-biting mosquito in the town of Amherst.](#) The mosquito was collected on July 23 and tested at the State Laboratory Institute.

Massachusetts residents are reminded to not only take measures to protect themselves but also domestic animals they may own. Fortunately for animal owners, there are precautionary measures that can be taken to protect against mosquito-borne diseases like West Nile Virus (WNV) and EEE, including vaccinations.

There are effective vaccines for both WNV and EEE available for horses. The best time to vaccinate animals is in May, before the height of mosquito season. However, since exposures can occur well into October, any unaffected equine can still benefit from the protection of vaccination. It takes several weeks for an animal to be fully protected by a vaccine. Foals may be vaccinated as early as 2-3 months of age when there is an increased disease risk. Animals infected by EEE and WNV develop neurologic symptoms that can lead to death. There is no treatment for either infection, although supportive care can be provided. In addition to horses, WNV and EEE pose a serious risk to other species, including ratites (e.g. ostrich, emu), pheasants, llamas and alpacas. Owners of those species should consult with their veterinarian about vaccinations.

Animals diagnosed with WNV or EEE must be reported to the MDAR [Division of Animal Health](#) at 617-626-1795 and to the [Department of Public Health](#) (DPH) at 617-983-6800.

Rural Electrification Upgrades for Renewable Energy Economic Development Program Opportunity Notice

Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources has released a [Rural Electrification Upgrades for Renewable Energy Economic Development Program Opportunity Notice #PON-ENE-2014-003](#) today on Comm-PASS. The link to the Notice can be found [here](#).

This \$3 million Program Opportunity Notice is meant to allocate grant funding through a competitive grant process to help support power line upgrades for rural business that can benefit from distributed renewable generation that can otherwise not be economically interconnected. Rural businesses that seek to develop an onsite Renewable Distributed Generation project that requires upgrades to the electric grid to supply or support existing businesses within Massachusetts are eligible to apply.

Massachusetts Tomato Contest to be Held August 19th

The 29th Annual Massachusetts Tomato Contest will be held at Boston's City Hall Plaza Farmers' Market on Monday, August 19th in conjunction with the start of Massachusetts Farmers' Market Week. Tomatoes will be judged by a panel of experts on flavor, firmness/slicing quality, exterior color and shape. Always a lively and fun event, the day is designed to increase awareness of locally grown produce.

Farmers who want to submit entries can bring tomatoes to the City Hall Plaza Farmers' Market between 9:00 am and 10:15 am on August 19th or drop their entries off with the corresponding registration form to one of several locations around the state on August 17th or 18th. These tomatoes will be brought in to Boston on Monday. For the complete details, including contest criteria and a registration form, [click here](#).

The 29th Annual Tomato Contest is sponsored by the MDAR, New England Vegetable and Berry Growers Association and Mass Farmers Markets.

Massachusetts Food Day Team Update

Food Day in Massachusetts is gaining momentum by the week! A majority of you are joining us for another year and many of you are new to the Mass Food Day team. This newsletter will serve as a guide to the next steps in this movement to bring greater awareness of what is working with our local food systems and where we can work together to strengthen it.



We have been conducting meetings, non-stop, across the state for 2 months and the enthusiasm is surpassing last year's wave of participation-what does that mean? You and hundreds of other organizers across the state will reach even more neighbors, members and constituents, sharing the message of good health, locally grown products and improved policies for access for all to nutritious, healthy food.

We are 3 months away! Some folks have brought their ideas together and some teams are still brainstorming...don't worry about where you are in the process, as long as your enthusiasm and your sense of purpose is intact, you are fine! The next month will be about getting a timeline for planning and having a bird's eye view of where we are all going as a team. Below are some of the next steps for the campaign:

#1 First statewide call/webinar, August 5, 2013, 11:00am-12:00pm

To join call: Registration Web Link: <https://www4.gotomeeting.com/register/272397063>

Agenda:

- Overview of where we are and highlights so far
- Timeline and next steps
- Discuss tools and resources and how to stay connected with the statewide network
- Several organizers from around the state give quick updates and snapshots from last year and this year
- Media planning committee sign up and update from our media expert, Tim Stansky!
- And time for questions and help!

#2 Local meetings happening this week across the state:

Tues, July 30th, 5:30pm - 6:30 pm: Fall River/Dartmouth/New Bedford meeting - [Citizens for Citizens](#), Inc., 264 Griffin St., Fall River, MA. Parking is available in lot.

Wed, July 31st, 12:00pm - 1:00 pm: Holyoke/Springfield/Northampton meeting - MA Green High Performance Computing Center, 100 Bigelow St., Holyoke. www.mghpcc.org

Two parking lots and street parking is available. (coffee and tea will be provided, and feel free to bring a bag lunch!)

Thurs, Aug 1st, 11:30 am-12:30 pm: Lawrence meeting - [The YWCA of Greater Lawrence](#), 38 Lawrence Street, Lawrence, MA
A parking permit is necessary to park in the lot, but some street parking is available. To obtain a parking permit, email Vilma Lora at vlora@ywcawlawrence.org.

Thurs, Aug. 1st, 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm: Lynn meeting - [Lynn YMCA](#), 20 Neptune Blvd., Lynn, MA - Parking is available

Community engagement throughout the state is crucial to truly have a grassroots impact, so we hope you will join us to learn, network, share your thoughts, and join in the coalition that is leading the charge for healthy, sustainable, and affordable food in your state. Please RSVP Rose.Arruda@state.ma.us if you plan to attend a meeting for Food Day 2013!

[Events in August](#)

August 1 - Join New Entry for 6th Annual Open Farms Tour

August 9-11 - Northeast Organic Farming Association Summer Conference

August 24 - 100% Grass-Fed Seasonal Raw Milk Dairy

August 24 - Christmas Tree Annual Meeting

Calendar and details here: www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/events



MDAR's mission is to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture in Massachusetts. Through its four divisions – Agricultural Conservation & Technical Assistance, Agricultural Markets, Animal Health, and Crop and Pest Services – MDAR strives to support, regulate and enhance the rich diversity of the Commonwealth's agricultural community to promote economically and environmentally sound food safety and animal health measures, and fulfill agriculture's role in energy conservation and production. For more information, visit MDAR's website at mass.gov/agr, and/or follow at twitter.com/MDARCommish.